



Security Council

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LETTER DATED 9 MAY 1994 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED
TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

The latest information provided by relevant United Nations officials regarding the transit of Serbian tanks through the Sarajevo exclusion zone, rather than clarifying it, in fact further brings into question the judgement of the officials responsible for this venture. Allegedly, the Serbian tanks were given permission to transit through the exclusion zone by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General based on the following reasons:

- (a) The tanks were to travel under the control of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) and they were to be inoperable during the transfer;
- (b) There were no alternate routes for the tanks to travel as the only other "working" route would have taken the tanks through the centre of Gorazde;
- (c) The passage of the tanks was not in violation of the exclusion zone as the aim of the exclusion zone was to protect civilians;
- (d) To facilitate the peace process.

Regarding the above reasoning, I would like to make the following observations:

(a) The transit of the tanks under United Nations control obviously did not extract a great deal of good will from Karadzic's Serbs, as one of the tanks departed from the convoy while it was in the exclusion zone, and up to this moment, has yet to be located. Needless to say, this faux pas in itself inspires little confidence in our Government towards those United Nations officials responsible for losing a tank;

(b) Alternate routes in fact do exist. These tanks should have been returned to their place of origin, Serbia and Montenegro. Had the tanks been transited back to Serbia, a contribution to the consolidation of the Gorazde exclusion zone would have been achieved while simultaneously preventing the tanks from wreaking havoc in other parts of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The tanks' presence in any area of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina directly violates our civilians' security, our Republic's

sovereignty and territorial integrity and numerous Security Council and General Assembly resolutions. The United Nations officials who participated in this misadventure have misused their authority and abused their mandate to contribute to these violations. This is totally unacceptable and exhibits the highest level of indifference and arrogance towards our Republic and the safety of our population. It cannot be emphasized enough that at least part of the reason the war in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina continues is the failure to implement relevant Security Council resolutions. Violations of resolutions by those entrusted to carry out their implementation can hardly be described as a means to end the war;

(c) Furthermore, the reasoning that no civilians were threatened in this transfer fails to take into account the lives of civilians outside the exclusion zone. Does the Special Representative of the Secretary-General really expect that these transited tanks will spare civilians in other Bosnian towns? Such trading of lives is unacceptable to my Government;

(d) For the above-stated reasons and the fact that continued appeasement can only encourage further aggression, this unfortunate incident has actually undermined the peace process. The Serbians now insist on two absolute conditions for negotiations: the lifting of the sanctions before any further talks; and the precommitment to the creation of a Serbian sovereign State out of most of the territory (certainly more than 49 per cent of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina).

One has to question whether the relevant United Nations officials should extend any cooperation to these Serbian elements as long as they adopt these types of uncompromising positions.

May I ask for your kind assistance in circulating this letter as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Muhamed SACIRBEY
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
